

REMARKS

A. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for recognizing that the subject matter of claims 20-24 and 27-30 is allowable and that the subject matter of claims 4 and 14 would be allowable if their subject matter is combined with that of other claims. Accordingly, Applicants have placed the subject matter of claim 4 into independent claim 1 and the subject matter of claim 14 into independent claim 11.

B. Claim Objections

Claims 4 and 14 were objected to by the Examiner. The Applicants have placed the subject matter of these claims into claim 1 or 11, respectively, and, therefore submit that the objections are now moot.

C. The 35 USC § 102 Rejections

Claims 1, 5-8, 11, 15-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,798,779 to Shimbashi et al ("Shimbashi"). Applicants respectfully disagree and traverse these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Claims 1, 5-8, 11 and 15-17 now include the feature of examining a SONET/SDH, C2 path overhead byte. Shimbashi does not disclose or suggest such an examination. Further, the Examiner has indicated that such an examination represents patentable subject matter.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of claims 1, 5-8, 11 and 15-17.

D. Entry of this Amendment After Final (AAF)

Entry of this AAF is respectfully solicited because the AAF: (a) places the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) does not raise any new issues regarding further search and/or consideration (i.e., the claims were revised as suggested by the Examiner and to correct typographical or grammatical errors); (c) does not present any additional claims without canceling the corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (d) places the application in better form for appeal, if an appeal is necessary.

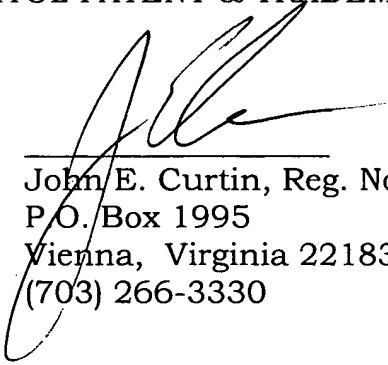
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact John E. Curtin at the telephone number listed below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-3777 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By



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